

My passion for improving the quality of care for my patients and helping them achieve independence is what brought me here to Congress.

Last year, I was proud to turn my experience into advocacy by guiding the Special Needs Trust Fairness Act through the legislative process. This commonsense bill empowered those living with disabilities to set up their own special needs trusts, an action which was barred by previous law. After receiving overwhelming bipartisan support in both the House and Senate, language from the bill was included in the 21st Century Cures Act, which was signed into law on December 13, 2016.

Mr. Speaker, safeguarding the rights of Americans living with disabilities is a cause I am honored to fight for, and I look forward to continuing my efforts.

HONORING THE LIFE OF DR. HOWARD KIRTLAND

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize a member of the medical community whom we recently lost.

Today, I honor the life and memory of Dr. Howard Kirtland, who passed away last week after years of selfless service to his community and employees through his practice, Venango Hematology and Oncology, as well as the Kirtland Cancer Foundation.

Dr. Kirtland was well-known for his kindness and generosity throughout the community. Those closest to him will be deeply impacted by the loss of a man who was loved for his mentorship, selflessness, and incredible work ethic.

Dr. Kirtland founded the Kirtland Cancer Foundation with his personal resources to financially assist cancer patients and their families, as well as providing scholarship money to students affected by the disease.

Dr. Kirtland was born in San Antonio, Texas, and raised in Poughkeepsie, New York. During his residency at the University of Virginia, he left school to enlist in the Army. He served in Vietnam before moving to Franklin, Pennsylvania, in the Pennsylvania Fifth Congressional District, to start his practice.

On behalf of the people of Pennsylvania, I recognize and honor Dr. Kirtland for his incredible life of service to those around him. He will be greatly missed.

BORDER SECURITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MCCLINTOCK). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. FITZPATRICK) for 5 minutes.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, as an FBI agent, my job was to keep the American people safe from all enemies, both foreign and domestic.

On the national security front, those components include a sound counterterrorism strategy, a sound counterintelligence strategy, a sound cybersecurity strategy, a sound foreign policy, and a sound border security strategy.

Before us today, Mr. Speaker, is the issue of border security, an issue that,

quite frankly, has been largely ignored over the past several decades by both parties. As a result, our national security remains compromised at a point in time where we live in a more dangerous world now than we ever have.

When you combine the fact that our enemies are now both more sophisticated and better funded, coupled with our border security apparatus which is underfunded, outdated, and compromised, this is a recipe for disaster for our Nation. The time is now to act on securing our border: north, south, east, and west—all of its components in all of our geographic regions.

As a member of the Homeland Security Committee, I have spent time on the border with our brave women and men on the front lines, working with CPB officers and Border Patrol agents. I have spent time both on the ocean and in the sky with brave women and men in our Coast Guard. Mr. Speaker, they are pleading for our help, and shame on us if we do not deliver for them.

Their requests are simple: increase their manpower to provide them with a sufficient number of agents to interdict not just drugs and guns from cartels, but also criminals and terrorists who seek to do us harm; invest in the technology that they need to do their jobs, to include drones and aerial surveillance, infrared technology, heat sensors, motion detectors both above and below the ground, and an array of 21st century, high-tech options that serve as force multipliers along the border.

They need physical barriers in various forms along various stretches of the border in order to slow down the cartels and allow for sufficient response time for the agents to interdict. Moreover, we must invest heavily in a robust human intelligence program, giving our agents the resources they need to recruit human sources on the other side of the border to provide our agents with the advance notice of both the sources and the methods of criminal conspiracies that are forming along the border.

In addition, we must bolster the Office of Inspector General to crack down on border corruption through the use of drug testing, financial screening, and polygraph examinations.

Mr. Speaker, the concept of border security is a multipronged challenge that requires action on all fronts, not just one or two, and I urge my friends and colleagues on both sides of the aisle: Please do not politicize this issue.

Securing operational control of our border is a national security emergency. My former law enforcement colleagues who are putting their life on the line every day while protecting our borders are asking for our help. Let us not let them down.

THE TAYLOR FORCE ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania). The Chair

recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. CURBELO) for 5 minutes.

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1164, the Taylor Force Act. This legislation conditions financial assistance from the United States on the Palestinian Authority's termination of support for terror committed by individuals under its jurisdictional control. In order for the Palestinian Authority to receive aid, it would also be required to condemn acts of terror and cease providing payments to those who have committed such acts.

The bill is named after Taylor Force, a former U.S. Army officer who was stabbed to death during a terrorist attack in Tel Aviv.

This legislation is a commonsense solution that we must address. The Palestinian Authority, under the leadership of Mahmoud Abbas, has continued to support efforts that undermine attempts at peace between the Palestinians and our great ally Israel.

The blatant encouragement of terrorist activity by the Palestinian Authority must end. Why should we be rewarding this kind of behavior?

The Palestinian Authority perpetuates terrorism by paying salaries to terrorists who are in prison. To make matters worse, those salaries increase the longer they are in jail, thus encouraging these terrorists to commit more violent acts.

This is unacceptable. The United States must do something to end this conduct because the reality is it is costing innocent lives. I believe the goals of H.R. 1164, the Taylor Force Act, are a step in the right direction, and I urge my colleagues to join me in calling for its consideration and passage in the House.

LOW INCOME HOUSING

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to draw much-needed attention to our Nation's rental affordability crisis, from rural America to the suburbs, to the big cities, this problem grows in severity each day, limiting Americans' abilities to provide quality food, medical care, and safety for their families.

My home State of Florida has been particularly hard-hit, ranking third among States with the greatest number of severely cost-burdened renters. In my district, the Florida Keys continue to face an affordable housing crisis that has made it difficult for the workers and entrepreneurs of its ever-growing economy.

That is why, earlier this year, I attended the opening of the first-ever affordable housing project for low-income seniors outside of Key West. I have also been working to ensure Naval Air Station Key West, which currently has 166 units on base that have sat vacant for several years, is put to better use. While the process is slow, I am grateful for the Navy's assistance as we work to explore the possibility of opening these units for more affordable housing in the Keys.